

THE
**FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS**

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Dinosaur National Monument

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: DINO

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Dinosaur National Monument, in NW Colorado and NE Utah, includes 210,844 acres of scenic river canyons, mountains, and basins. Twenty-three exposed geological strata, the National Park Service's most complete geologic record, combine with elevation and topography to create many habitats that support a unique diversity of plant and animal life. The best known park resource is the world-renowned dinosaur quarry that preserves approximately 1,500 fossils in situ. The quarry is the world's best window on Late-Jurassic dinosaurs. Recent excavations in the park have revealed some of the world's most significant Cretaceous-era dinosaur finds.

The Green and Yampa rivers carve deep canyons that provide varied habitats and shelter archeological sites. The park's record of human occupation and cultural development is one of North America's most complete. The Yampa River is especially unique as the last remaining unregulated major tributary in the Colorado River system. It harbors outstanding examples of remnant native cottonwood-willow and box elder riparian communities, and it provides critical habitat for several endangered Colorado River fish.

Because the Yampa and Green were so similar before the construction of Flaming Gorge Dam, Dinosaur is a natural laboratory for study of impacts of large dams. We have a regulated reach (Lodore), an unregulated reach (Yampa), and a combination reach (the Green below the confluence). These three river stretches offer a rare opportunity for scientific study related to impacts, preservation, and restoration - what we have lost and our opportunities for conservation and restoration.

The Centennial vision for the park includes taking advantage of the opportunities for research. We envision that Dinosaur will serve as a preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science, resource management and scholarship to understand the history of life on earth and its response to environmental change. The park will continue its pioneering role on the Colorado Plateau of addressing invasive plants, especially along the river corridors.

The project to replace the condemned Quarry Visitor Center will result in a model for energy efficiency for the National Park Service by being designed and constructed to meet platinum Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. The project will result in the continued protection of and public access to the fossil wall. Exhibits will engage all segments of the visiting public.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Mary Risser

Site: DINO

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Replace informational wayside exhibits with waysides that better connect the visitor with the significance of the park and promote deeper stewardship. Create visitor center exhibits that better connect visitors with the significance of the Carnegie Quarry and promote deeper stewardship of all park fossil resources. Demonstrate excellence in personal and non-personal interpretation at Dinosaur National Monument.

☐ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: DINO

STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

☒ **Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.**

Rehabilitate and restore the Josie Morris Cabin to good condition and the cultural landscapes at the Josie Morris Ranch and Chew Pool Creek Ranch to good condition. These projects require an integrated natural/cultural resource management approach by not only focusing upon the historic structures but by also removing invasive plants and restoring orchards and irrigation systems. Because many descendants remain in the local area, both projects have the potential to generate a great deal of local interest that could result in increased volunteerism and private donations.

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☒ **Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.**

Restore the riparian habitat through the removal of invasive plants in the Yampa and Green River corridors. Dinosaur has been in the forefront of tamarisk removal on the Colorado Plateau. We recently completed an Invasive Plant Management Plan that can be used as a template by other Colorado Plateau parks. We will continue the extremely successful "Weed Warrior" program that generates thousands of volunteer hours every year solely devoted to tamarisk removal. We will also continue to remove invasive plants through traditional and non-traditional means. For example, goats are being used in the Cub Creek drainage to treat Russian knapweed and tamarisk beetles have been placed at Echo Park to address the tamarisk problem. All these efforts will be thoroughly documented and results shared with other parks.

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☒ **Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.**

The treatment of the Quarry Visitor Center, which is scheduled for 2010, will greatly improve the FCI for the entire park. Dinosaur serves as one of the pilot parks in the development of the Park Asset Management Plan (PAMP), and the Facility Manager will serve as a PAMP trainer and facilitator in future years. The DINO PAMP will be used to direct where resources will be dedicated.

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Site: DINO

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

Complete the National Register Nominations for the archeological sites in the Cub Creek watershed and in the Jones Hole creek and Eli creek area. Complete and update the cultural resources inventory of the Yampa River corridor, and complete the condition assessments for 300 archeological sites providing for 100% of known archeological sites (650) with condition assessments.

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☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Complete the Grazing Management Plan and develop a strategy and plan to restore native upland habitat. Develop a Backcountry and Wilderness Management Plan.

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Site: DINO

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Dinosaur will serve as a preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science, resource management, and scholarship to understand the history of life on earth and its response to environmental change. We will revitalize the park's paleontology program to provide scientists the opportunity to study and understand dinosaurs and the ecosystems that they lived in and make those scientific results available to the public to allow the visitor to experience first hand deep geological time and the life of ancient past.

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Site: DINO

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Encourage children to be future conservationists.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

Serve as a model for energy efficiency for the National Park Service by ensuring that the new Quarry Visitor Center and exhibit shelter are designed to platinum rating under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. The WASO Line Item Construction Program and Denver Service Center are partnered with Dinosaur National Monument to design and construct the facilities to showcase the National Park Service's leadership in sustainability.

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Site: DINO

RECREATION

☒ Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

☒ Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

Work with local and state travel boards to help promote the lesser-known aspects of Dinosaur National Monument to increase visitation.

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☒ Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Develop new and innovative programs to attract more visitors to ranger-facilitated activities.

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Site: DINO

EDUCATION

☒ Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop a volunteer "Ed Corps" to increase the park's ability to conduct curriculum-based education programs in the park. Work with educators to develop curricula for teacher directed on- and off-site visits. Publish curriculum-based teacher guides on web.

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Site: DINO

EDUCATION

☒ Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

☒ Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Use the internet to make park history, resources, and the results of management and scientific activities available to the global scientific, educational, and public community. Digitize scholarly research about park resources and publish on the web. Rejuvenate the current web pages to make them more content-rich and useful to a variety of audiences and interests.

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☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Just as the new Quarry Visitor Center and exhibit shelter will set the standard for the National Park Service for sustainability, the exhibitry for the facilities will incorporate state-of-the-art exhibit technology. Modernize the exhibits in the Canyon Area Visitor Center to increase visitor understanding about the significant non-fossil resources in the park. Explore and develop alternative technology that helps provoke interest in exploring the various resources of the park.

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EDUCATION

☒ Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

☒ Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

Create a new Junior Ranger Program and Junior Paleontologist program that is offered at no cost to visitors. Conduct an outreach program in the local communities to enroll local students in both programs.

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Site: DINO

EDUCATION

☒ **Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.**

☒ **Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.**

Complete the project to replace the Quarry Visitor Center. The project will once again provide protection for and access for the public to the 1,500 dinosaur fossils left in situ on the 50' high by 150' long wall. The project will also move the other functions of the existing building, such as visitor services, bookstore, and offices, to a location with more stable soil.

Continue to work with the commercial river runners to enhance their interpretation of the park, its resources, and the threats to those resources to contribute to visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of Dinosaur.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ **Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.**

☒ **Establish a structured professional development curriculum to provide park managers with the skills to apply best business practices and superior leadership.**

Build upon the program that the park established in 2007 to continue the professional development of the park's management team and program managers. In 2007, the entire management team completed the 360 assessment, and the management team and program managers completed the Myers-Briggs and Hogan Assessments. New managers in the park will complete these development opportunities. The superintendent will work with the regional office to enhance the program in future years to ensure continued professional development. The management team recognizes their responsibility to prepare their employees for future positions.

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☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Provide comprehensive training and mentoring using the most current national interpretive standards so that Dinosaur becomes a leader and example in the region for producing high quality interpretive products. Each division chief will work with their employees to recognize interest in and provide developmental opportunities so that employees obtain the skills that they will need for future positions.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

☒ Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

Develop strong, mutually beneficial relationships with local tourism agencies. Seek opportunities for grants and/or partnerships that will enhance mission goals.

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